

REMARKS

Claims 2-9 are pending and under consideration in the above-identified application, and Claims 10 -21 were previously cancelled.

In the Final Office Action, Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9 were rejected, and Claims 4 and 7 were objected to.

In this Amendment, Claim 2 is amended and Claim 7 is cancelled. No new matter has been introduced as a result of this matter.

Accordingly, Claims 2 – 6 and 8 – 9 are at issue.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 103 Rejection of Claims

Claims 2-3, 5-6 and 8-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, as obvious over *Murai, et al.* (“*Murai*”) (U.S. Patent No. 7,097,944).

In the Office Action, Claims 4 and 7 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 7 depends on Claim 2.

As such, Claim 2, which has been amended by incorporating the substantive limitations of Claim 7, is patentable over *Murai*, as are dependent Claims 3 – 6 and 8 – 9, for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this claim rejection be withdrawn.

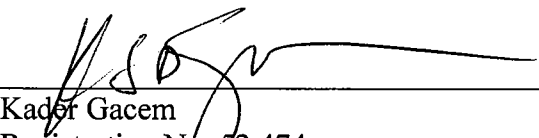
II. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that Claims 2 – 6 and 8 – 9 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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